THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): The proposals on farm sector for which the Cabinet Secretary has been entrusted to study and analyse include:

(i) Pilot Crop Insurance Scheme.

(ii) market intervention in case of surplus production in poor States.

(iii) introduction of Agri-Card by the State Governments.

(iv) keeping in abeyance of the accummulated interest charge of loans of farmers who have already been granted loan waiver.

(v) reconsideration of the decision to effect 5% cut in the budgetary allocation of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

(vi) utilisation of savings on account of reduction in subsidy of DAP/MOP for the plan schemes of Agriculture Ministry.

(vii) larger share to NAFED in export trade.

(viii) liberalising central grants to financially weak States.

(ix) proposal to invest Rs. 250 crores in rainfed States.

(x) relaxation of ban on new schemes.

(xi) restructuring the finance of sick cooperative banks, etc.

Losses due to Natural Calamities in Gujarat

1106. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the death and destruction wrought by natural calamities like earth-quakes, cyclones, floods, cloud bursts and rains, during tfhe current year (1997) so far, in Gujarat and other States indicating item-wise/incident-wise details thereof;

(b) the comparative figures for the preceding two years; and

(c) the steps taken to avert the calamities and to mitigate the hardships and sufferings of the victims?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) and (b) On the basis of the information received from the State Governments, a Statement indicating the loss of human lives and extent of damage to houses and crops in various States in the wake of various natural calamities during 1997. (upto November, 15), 1996 and 1995 is at Annexure and Similar information for Gujarat is at the same Annexure [*See Appendix 182, Annexure No. 28]*

(c) The programmes implemented/ measures taken to reduce the impact of the natural calamities include:—

(i) Flood control measures like construction of reservoirs and embankments, channel improvement, town protection and river training works.

(ii) Drought Prone Areas Programme and Desert Development Programme.

(iii) Satelite based cyclone forecasting and warning system.

(iv) Expansion and upgrading of seismological monitoring network.

(v) Calamity Relief Fund/National Fund for Calamity Relief with an average annual allocation of Rs. 1400.00 crore for immediate disaster response measures.